

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CARACA 11838 142025Z

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ACTION SS-25

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FOR DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY EAGLEBURGER AND ASSISTANT SECRETARY ROGERS

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: OGEN, VE
SUBJECT: OPERATION CLEAN SLATE

REF: (A) STATE 265481; (B) CARACAS 6880; (C) STATE 144163

1. YOUR RESPONSE TO MY PROPOSAL IS MOST GRATIFYING. A CONTINUE TO THINK THAT WE COULD EFFECTIVELY RESTRUCTURE THE MISSION ALONG THE LINES INDICATED IN REF (B), AND PROFIT BY DOING IT. I ALSO AGREE THAT WE SHOULD GET UNDER WAY SOON. THE PROBLEM THERE IS THE FIT BETWEEN STRUCTURE AND PERSONNEL.

2. WE HAVE GOOD PEOPLE HERE, BUT IN CONTEMPLATING THE PROPOSED REORGANIZATION I SENSE SOME SERIOUS GAPS IN THE AVAILABLE TALENTS AND SKILLS. AFTER ALL, THE DEPARTMENT MADE THE ASSIGNMENTS TO FILL THE SLOTS IN A TRADITIONAL STRUCTURE. TWO ALTERNATIVES ARE OPEN: (1) PROCEED NOW (OR SHORTLY AFTER THE FIRST OF THE YEAR) TO ESTABLISH THE SIX UNITS ON A TENTATIVE, TRIAL BASIS; OR (2) WAIT UNTIL NEXT SUMMER TO TAKE MORE DEFINITIVE ACTION WHERE SCHEDULED TRANSFERS WILL PROVIDE AN OPPORTUNITY TO COVER THE GAPS I PERCEIVE.

3. BEFORE WE MAKE A CHOICE, I WOULD LIKE TO PROCEED WITH THE
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PAGE 02 CARACA 11838 142025Z

FOLLOWING PRELIMINARY STEPS: (A) A FULL DISCUSSION IN WASHINGTON

OF THE PERSONNEL PROBLEMS AND IMPLICATIONS (I WILL BE AVAILABLE THERE NOVEMBER 21, OR THE FOLLOWING DAY IF THAT IS MORE CONVENIENT); (B) A DISCUSSION OF THE PLAN WITH MY STAFF HERE AFTER MY RETURN; AND (C) A VISIT TO CARACAS IN MID-DECEMBER BY A QUALIFIED MEMBER OF YOUR STAFF TO HELP US CHART OUR COURSE.

4. I RECOGNIZE THE DEPARTMNET'S INTEREST IN PERSONNEL SAVINGS AND SHARE IT TO THE EXTENT THAT FEWER PEOPLE CAN MAKE FOR MORE EFFICIENCY--IF THEY ARE THE RIGHT PEOPLE. I WOULD PREFER TO DELAY ADDRESSING THE SPECIFICS UNTIL WE GET INTO DETAILED PLANNING, BUT SEE NO REASON NOT TO ESTABLISH THE TIGHTEST POSSIBLE ORGANIZATION FROM THE OUTSET. AS YOU ARE AWARE, HOWEVER, I ADVOCATE A DIFFERENT APPROACH TO THE COMMERCIAL OPERATION IN CARACAS. OUR TASK-FORCE PROPOSAL (CARACAS 11222) SEEMS TO ME WORTHY OF THE DEPARTMENT'S MOST SERIOUS CONSIDERATION. FINALLLY, I MUST NOTE THAT OUR PRAISEWORTHY DRIVE TO CUT THE FAT OUT OF OVERSEAS OPERATIONS APPEARS TO HAVE LITTLE SUPPORT FROM THOSE SEVERAL OTHER AGENCIES THAT CONTINUE TO DEPLOY LARGE STAFFS HERE.
SHLAUDEMAM

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